

SonomaWORKS PLAN ADDENDUM

SONOMA COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN

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I. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

This plan outlines the Sonoma County Human Services Department's (HSD) approach to developing a comprehensive Community Service Plan as required and in accordance with Assembly Bill (AB) 1542. According to AB 1542, counties are mandated to provide Community Service for SonomaWORKS recipients who have completed 18 to 24 months of welfare-to-work services and have not obtained unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum required hours of participation. An 18-month welfare-to-work plan may be extended for an additional six months if it is expected that the extension will lead to a job.

Community Service activities are to be performed in public or private nonprofit agencies. Placement activities must fill an unmet need in the community, benefit the participant, and provide training and transferable skills that will assist the participant in obtaining unsubsidized employment.

Sonoma County's Community Service plan was developed after gathering input from the community including private sector employers, education agencies, organized labor, recipients of aid, government agencies, faith based, and community based organizations. Focus groups, involving over 100 community stakeholders were convened during the development of SonomaWORKS. Surveys were provided to all participants.

In addition to the focus groups, Community Forums were held in various locations throughout Sonoma County. Information provided by the participants of the forums and focus groups was included in the Request for Proposals issued for Community Services.

The HSD contracts the provision of Community Services to Goodwill Industries, which serves as the lead agency for a consortium of five community-based organizations. HSD staff determines required hours and services and refers participants to the contracted provider. Services include community service slot development with public or private non-profit agencies, placement of participants in slots, work maturity and life skills training, and job search and job retention workshops to help participants transition to unsubsidized employment.

II. COMMUNITY SERVICE TARGET POPULATION

The target population to be served consists of SonomaWORKS recipients who have completed their 18 or 24 month welfare to work time period, as applicable, and have not found unsubsidized employment sufficient to meet the minimum required hours of participation; and for whom the county has certified that no job is available to fulfill the minimum required hours of participation, and who continue to meet SonomaWORKS financial eligibility criteria.

Community service is also available for participants who have not yet reached the end of their 18-24 month time limits but need work experience to become employed. Participants may have barriers to securing employment including, but not limited to, issues of behavioral/physical health, language/culture, education/aptitude, and social

compatibility. Additionally, for individuals living in remote locations, full-time, unsubsidized employment may not be immediately obtainable. Therefore, intensive, ongoing support to successfully participate in Community Service activities will be required.

III. COMMUNITY SERVICE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Community Service activities shall be designated as temporary and transitional activities. Community Service is mandated for SonomaWORKS recipients who have reached their 18/24 month time limit and have not obtained employment that meets the required hours of participation. Activities prior to community service are displayed in the attached client flow chart. (See Attachment A.) HSD intends to facilitate the SonomaWORKS participant's transition into unsubsidized employment prior to reaching their maximum lifetime limit of 60 months of cash assistance by providing appropriate training, work experience and Community Service opportunities.

Participants are required to perform Community Service activities for a maximum of 32 hours for single parent households and 35 hours for two parent households. If a participant is part-time employed, the Community Service hours will be reduced.

IV. COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

During the development of the SonomaWORKS plan, focus groups met to discuss needs of participants and the community. Surveys concerning community service were provided to all participants. (See Attachment B.) Due to the limited number returned (less than 3%), no conclusions were drawn.

Following SonomaWORKS implementation, five regional community forums were held as part of Sonoma County's effort to determine the needs of the community as they related to potential Welfare-to-Work program services. At the forums, HSD staff presented an overview of WtW and SonomaWORKS and solicited input about the unmet needs in the community. Public comment was invited at the Private Industry Council (PIC) and PIC Planning Funding Committee meetings to offer further input and to encourage open discussion with community members

Representatives from business, government, child care, housing, health, human services, community based organizations and faith based communities were participants in the focus groups and forums. (See Attachment C.)

Information from focus groups, forums, public comment, and staff were collected to provide the framework for a Request for Proposals (RFP) issued by Sonoma County in August 1998. The RFP outlined requirements of the community service program including compliance with state and federal worker protection provisions outlined in the Welfare and Institutions Code.

V. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

In response to the RFP, the Employment Group and SCAYD, a partnership of five community based organizations, with Goodwill Industries as the lead contracted service provider, was awarded the contract to provide community services. Core services include:

Participant Orientation	Development of Worksites
Worksite Placements	Case Management
Life Skills & Work Maturity Training	Employer services

Support services such as job search activities, after-school programs for youth of community service participants, and job retention workshops are available and may be approved by HSD staff for participants meeting the work requirements:

VII. UNMET COMMUNITY NEEDS

To identify the unmet community needs, HSD uses Employment Account Representatives located in each region of the county to network with non profits and government agencies to market workforce development services and develop community service sites. Organizations that provide community service worksites throughout the county include but are not limited to schools child care centers, medical centers, animal shelters, museums, food banks, community-based organization, and government agencies. (See Attachment D.)

VIII. COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Employment and Training Division of the Human Services Department will provide staff who are currently working with participants to administer Community Service. Prior to beginning Community Service, E&T staff will certify that no job is available and the participant continues to meet SonomaWORKS financial eligibility requirements. Failure to comply with the Community Service requirements, without good cause, will result in the adult family member being sanctioned.

Prior to placement in Community Service, the client will sign a required Welfare To Work Activity Agreement (WTW₂) in preparation for a meeting with the Community Service provider. At the first meeting, the employment services specialist will provide clients with an overview of the program requirements and expectations. Attendees will be given an appointment to return for an interview with a employment specialist to establish individual placements.

At the interview, the client's employment plan will be reviewed for employment history/ training and options for placement will be discussed and an interview with the selected Community Services worksite supervisor will be scheduled. A

placement contract will be completed and Community Service expectations will be discussed. Once the client is interviewed and the worksite supervisor agrees to the placement, the worksite supervisor will sign the placement contract. All worksite supervisors will be responsible for completing timesheets and monthly evaluations.

The Employment Specialist will work with public and private nonprofit agencies that have indicated that they are interested in a placement(s). The Employment Specialist will make every effort to meet the needs of the agency while ensuring that the client will be provided the opportunity for skill development. Participants whose placement is less than the mandated 32/35 hours will be required to participate in other work activities. Other welfare-to-work activities, such as education and training, may be included in an individual's community service assignment only if they are required for, or relevant to the specific community service activity in which a recipient is placed. Assignment to educational or training activities is individualized based upon the requirements of the community service placement and the individual's skills. The combined Community Service and work activity may not exceed 32/35 hours per week.

IX. DISPLACEMENT PROVISIONS

HSD and its service provider will comply with the antidisplacement provisions set forth in the Welfare & Institution (W&I) Code Section 11324.6 and MPP Section 42-720. Each service site organization will provide a written statement to the effect that a training position for a Community Service participant shall not be created as a result of, or shall not result in any of the following:

- Displacement or partial displacement of current employees, including, but not limited to, a reduction in hours of overtime and overtime work, wages, or employment benefits.
- The filling of positions which would otherwise be promotional opportunities for current employees, except when positions are to be filled through an open process in which participants are provided equal opportunity to compete.
- The filling of a position, prior to compliance with applicable personnel procedures or provisions of collective bargaining agreements.
- The filling of established unfilled public agency positions, unless the positions are unfunded in a public agency budget.
- The filling of a position created by termination, layoff, or reduction in work force, caused by the employer's intent to fill the position with a subsidized position pursuant to this plan.

- A strike, lockout, or other bona fide labor dispute, or violation of any existing collective bargaining agreement between employees and employers.
- The filling of a work assignment customarily performed by a worker in a job classification customarily performed by a worker in a job classification within a recognized collective bargaining unit in that specific service site, or the filling of a work assignment in any bargaining unit in which funded positions are vacant or in which regular employees are on layoff.
- The termination of a contract for services, prior to its expiration date, that results in the displacement or partial displacement of workers performing contracted services, caused by the employee's intent to fill the position with a subsidized position pursuant to this plan.
- The denial to a participant of protections afforded workers on the service site by state and federal laws governing workplace health, safety, and representation.

X. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SonomaWORKS recipients who participate in Community Service are eligible for a full array of supportive services including childcare, transportation and ancillary services. Each participant will be assigned to a case manager who will monitor his or her progress and serve as a liaison with the placement agency.

XI. SUMMARY

Community Service provides an opportunity for private, nonprofit organizations and the public sector to cooperatively participate in the training of SonomaWORKS recipients, while at the same time helping to meet the unmet needs in the community. HSD will utilize the information gathered from the Employment Account Representatives in order to place SonomaWORKS recipients in Community Service placements that provide the skills necessary for transition into unsubsidized employment.

XII. CONTACT PERSONS

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SonomaWORKS Service Delivery Model

